

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims in this listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing super-micro powder of a pure metal having a particle size of not more than 0.4 µm comprising performing a vapor phase chemical reaction including heating a starting material forming metal chloride vapor, the starting material containing metal chloride and elemental metal of the metal contained in the metal chloride, and reducing the metal chloride vapor with hydrogen gas to produce the super-micro powder of a pure metal having a particle size of not more than 0.4 µm.
2. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of a pure metal according to claim 1, wherein the metal chloride has a valence of at least two.
3. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of a pure metal according to claim 1, wherein the metal chloride is at least one of CuCl₂, FeCl₃ and NiCl₂.
4. (Currently Amended) A method of producing super-micro powder of an alloy having a particle size of not more than 0.4 µm comprising performing a vapor phase chemical reaction including heating a starting material forming metal chloride vapor, the starting material containing metal chloride and elemental metal as alloying components; and reducing the metal chloride vapor with hydrogen gas to form the super-micro powder of an alloy having a particle size of not more than 0.4 µm.

5. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of an alloy according to claim 4, wherein the metal chloride is at least one of CuCl₂, CuCl, FeCl₃, FeCl₂, NiCl₂, CoCl₂ and SnCl₂.

6. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of an alloy according to claim 4, wherein the elemental metal is at least one of Cu, Fe, Ni, Co, Ag, W, Mo, Nb, Ta, Cr, V, Ge and Sb.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of a pure metal according to claim 2, wherein the metal chloride is at least one of CuCl₂, FeCl₃ and NiCl₂.

8. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of an alloy according to claim 5, wherein the elemental metal is at least one of Cu, Fe, Ni, Co, Ag, W, Mo, Nb, Ta, Cr, V, Ge and Sb.

9. (Previously Presented) A method of producing super-micro powder of a pure metal according to claim 1, wherein the metal chloride and the elemental metal are mixed.